

Thinking Cancer Metaphorically: A Sociocultural Perspective Study On The Cancer Patients' Narratives.

Kanser dan Metafora: Kajian Perspektif Sosiobudaya dalam Mempengaruhi Naratif Pesakit Kanser

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ABSTRACT

Cancer is a complex disease that is usually difficult to talk about. Many cancer patients turn to metaphors in describing the disease and their cancer experiences as this allows them to communicate those experiences more effectively. While much research has been carried out on examining the different types of metaphors used by cancer patients, much more needs to be known about the metaphors used by them in relation to their sociocultural background and cognition. This study seeks to address this knowledge gap by examining the metaphors used among cancer patients to describe the disease and their cancer experiences. Most importantly, the study aims to investigate how these metaphors are shaped by the patients' sociocultural background. Using the Metaphorical Identification Procedure (MIP), the study analysed the data collected from 31 cancer patients from Kuching, Sarawak through semi-structured interview. The results show that the patients turned to "structural", "conspiracy" and "journey" metaphors and several other metaphors to describe the disease and their cancer experiences. The results also show that the cancer metaphors used by these patients were mostly shaped by their personal life experiences and their sociocultural understanding. The study concludes that the findings could have implications on the current debates over the use of cancer metaphors in oncology and help to drive some recommendations.

Keywords: Cancer; metaphor; Metaphorical Identification Procedure; sociocultural background; Malaysia

ABSTRAK

Kanser merupakan penyakit yang biasanya sukar untuk dibicarakan. Ramai pesakit kanser telah menggunakan metafora untuk mendeskripsikan penyakit kanser serta pengalaman mereka. Hal ini kerana metafora telah membolehkan pengalaman-pengalaman kanser ini dikomunikasikan dengan lebih berkesan. Walaupun kajian terhadap penggunaan metafora yang digunakan oleh pesakit telah banyak dijalankan, banyak lagi tentang penggunaan metafora untuk mendeskripsikan kanser oleh pesakit perlu difahami. Oleh sebab yang demikian, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengisi kelompangan kajian dengan mengenalpasti jenis metafora yang digunakan oleh pesakit untuk mendeskripsikan kanser. Bukan itu sahaja, kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti perkaitan antara metafora yang digunakan mendeskripsikan penyakit kanser dengan pengalaman sosiobudaya dan kognisi pesakit. Dengan menerapkan pendekatan Prosedur Pengenalpastian Metafora, kajian ini telah menganalisis data yang dikumpul dari 31 pesakit kanser di Kuching, Sarawak yang telah ditemu bual secara separa struktur. Hasil analisis mendapati pesakit kanser telah menggunakan metafora "stuktural", "konspirasi" dan "perjalanan" serta pelbagai metafora yang berlainan untuk mendeskripsikan penyakit kanser serta pengalaman kanser mereka. Selain itu, hasil analisis juga mendapati metafora yang digunakan oleh pesakit kanser untuk mendeskripsikan penyakit kanser telah dipengaruhi oleh pengalaman kehidupan and pemahaman sosiobudaya mereka. Kesimpulannya, hasil dapatan ini mempunyai implikasi terhadap perdebatan semasa mengenai penggunaan metafora kanser dalam bidang onkologi serta memberi cadangan untuk kajian masa depan.

Kata kunci: Kanser; metafora; Prosedur Pengenalpastian Metafora; latar belakang sosiobudaya; Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Cancer is a complex disease that is usually difficult to discuss about. Over the years, it has been describe through various communication means, one of them being the use of metaphor. Metaphor, in its general sense, is "a device for seeing something in terms of something else [as it] brings out the thisness of a that, or the thatness of a this" (Burke 1969: 503).

Put differently, metaphor is "seeing one thing as something else, pretending "this" is "that" because there is no knowledge of how to think or talk about "this", so instead "that" is a way of saying something" (McFague 1982: 15). This is because metaphors straddle many important boundaries between language and thought, semantics and pragmatics and rational communication and mere causal association (Ezeifeke 2013).